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1/4/77
DDO 74
January 4, 1977Desired Human Rights Improvements and GOA Actions in that Field

1. Publish a list of all held in detention.

30 DEC Argentine press reports that the Interior Ministry will begin to publish a weekly list of persons being held or freed by the Executive.

2. Regularize detention procedures.

3. Reestablish jurisdiction of civilian courts.

29 NOV A new law authorizing special military tribunals to try persons accused of subversive crimes goes into effect. The law extends the jurisdiction of military courts to cover lesser offenses formerly tried by civilian courts, such as intent to commit a crime against national security.

4. Give prisoners access to families and lawyers.

5. Release all detainees who are not promptly charged.

3 OCT La Opinion reports that over 300 persons under detention by the Executive have been released.

22 OCT Presidency officials inform Embassy that large numbers of those being held under State of Siege provisions are being released.

21 DEC Federal appeals court upholds the constitutional right of the government to hold people indefinitely under the State of Siege.

22 DEC Executive releases list of 541 detainees freed by the Executive since November 1.

30 DEC GOA publishes list of 123 freed detainees. Press reports that this brings the number of people released since March 24 to over 1660.

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6. Provide for public trials before civilian courts in security cases which are not clearly military.
 - 8 OCT Argentine Supreme Court has ruled that the jurisdiction of military justice system over subversion and arms control cases applies only when it is clear that the offense is actually linked to the security of the nation.
7. Investigate and try persons guilty of abusing prisoners.
8. Invite international organizations such as ICRC and IAHRC to Argentina.
 - 15 NOV Amnesty International concludes ten day visit.
 - 7 DEC Foreign Ministry tells Embassy that ICRC is currently visiting Argentina and that CAS would be welcome.
 - 15 DEC President Videla tells President of ICRC that a program of assistance to detainees may be organized.
 - 27 DEC Embassy reports on upcoming ICFTU visit to Argentina.
9. Recognize Article 3 of Geneva Convention.
10. Permit detainees to seek asylum abroad.
 - 7 OCT Embassy reports that for the second time in five months a federal judge has ruled that the constitutional right of persons to leave the country is in force. In both cases, GOA has appealed to the Supreme Court.
 - 10 OCT Argentine Court rules that Institutional Act suspending the constitutional right to opt to leave the country is valid.
11. Ensure that foreign nationals are not repatriated against their will.
 - 22 NOV UNHCR informs Embassy that there are still 10,000 refugees wishing resettlement. There have been no attacks on refugees in recent months.

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UNCLASSIFIED

- 3 -

12. Stop harassment of judges.

13. Punish both left and right wing extremists.

14 OCT Embassy reports that a significant number of policemen have been quietly punished or fired in recent weeks. According to sources, GOA is slowly but steadily working out undesirable and undisciplined elements from the police forces, including some who have been responsible for AAA type activities.

22 OCT Presidency officials report that the "central authorities" are beginning to get "wild elements" in the security forces under control.

2 NOV SRF reports that Army G-2 has been ordered to assure that security forces refrain from common crimes; 32 Buenos Aires police officers and two Army officials are reported under arrest.

14 DEC In interview with American journalists, President Videla acknowledges that security forces may be committing excesses but notes it is not the GOA's wish.

29 DEC USDAO reported that 14 soldiers in I Corps region have been arrested for improper conduct during countersubversive operations.

14. Stop harassment of foreign residents. (See No. 11)

15. Stop harassment of Catholic Church; Jews.

6 DEC Jewish leaders inform the Embassy that anti-Semitism is a far less serious problem than it was earlier.

30 DEC Embassy reports that according to Church sources there are no longer any priests or members of religious organizations under detention.

16. Stop harassment of academics.

3 DEC B.A. 7874 reports on unusual firing of General Vilas, the hard-line general responsible for

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- 4 -

purge at Bahia Blanca University.

17. Regularize police jurisdictions so that outsiders and Argentines will know where to go for help.

7 OCT Embassy reports on establishment of human rights working group in Foreign Ministry to handle all approaches on human rights from foreign governments.

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